Family & Friends SS Class Dr. Rick Griffith

November 3, 1996 Single Message

NIV 30 Minutes

**Submitting to God**

***James 4:7-12***

**Topic:** Lordship

**Subject:** What are the benefits of submitting our lives to God?

**Complement:** Submit to God—then He will honor you and you will not slander others.

**Purpose:** The listeners will submit to God.

***Introduction***

1. Interest: Many of us fear submitting ourselves to God (lose job, become missionary).
2. Need: Are you living in real submission to God? Do you fear submitting to Him unconditionally?
3. Subject: What are the benefits of submitting our lives to God?
4. Text: James 4:7-12 tells us one key advantage of genuinely living for Christ—or verse 10 does (read).

**[I. When we *let God be God* (humble ourselves) we will be honored by Him (7-10).]**

A. But how can you humble yourself before God (7-10a)?

(The following boils the 10 commands in the Greek down to 6…)

1. **Submit** (7a): Realize this is the godly response to knowing God opposes pride (v. 6).

2. **Resist** (7b): Resisting Satan leads to Satan decreasing his attacks.

a. Treat Satan as a real being, though less powerful than God.

b. Resist him with Scripture (Matt. 4).

3. **Draw Near** (8a): “You are only half as far away from God as you think. For every step you take towards Him, He takes a step toward you.”

4. **Change Your Behavior** (8b-c): Show pure actions and motives.

5. **Experience Good Grief** (9): Show remorse over sin (cf. Ps. 51).

6. **Swallow Your Pride** (10a): Don’t take the initiative to exalt yourself.

 What results from humbly submitting to God (7-10a)? We already noted it:

B. Humility by self leads to honor by God—new levels of fellowship and service (10b).

1. “The way up is down.”

2. “The lowly one becomes the lifted one” (BKC, 831).

3. Personal testimony: humbled myself to not use my business degree, honored now

4. Small group questions

(So this first benefit of submitting our lives to God is that God honors us. Verses 7-10 are more individual in nature, but now the last two verses are more relational. The first part depicts the vertical dimension of our lives, but the second the horizontal. This second benefit of submitting our lives to God is that…)

**II. When we *let God be judge* we don’t slander others (11-12).**

A. Don’t slander other believers (11a).

1. There is a difference between judging and discerning (overhead).

2. The most subtle form of slander is “the prayer request.”

B. The cause of slander is pride—placing our opinion over God’s right to judge (11b-12).

***Conclusion***

1. Main Idea: Submit to God—then He will honor you and you will not slander others.

2. Application: Which issue we’ve covered today will humility on your part be honored by God?

**Preliminary Questions**

**Verses Questions**

Context What did the author record just prior to this passage?

Purpose Why is this passage in the Bible?

Background What historical context helps us understand this passage?

**Tentative Subject/Complement Statements**

Text

**Possible Illustrations**

Text

**Submitting to God**

***James 4:7-12***

**Exegetical Outline**

Exegetical Idea: The results of submitting to God are being honored by Him and not judging other believers by slandering them.

I. (7-10) One result of submission to God is being honored by Him.

A. (7a) **Submit:** The *godly response* to knowing God opposes the proud (v. 6) is to submit to Him.

B. (7b-10a) The *way to submit* to God is by humbly approaching God backed by changed behavior.

1. (7b) **Resist:** The result of submitting to God by resisting Satan is that Satan will decrease his attacks.

2. (8a) **Draw Near:** The result of submitting to God by approaching Him humbly is that God’s presence will be felt in a deeper manner.

3. (8b-c) **Change Your Behavior:** The evidence of submission to God is pure actions and motives.

4. (9) **Experience Good Grief:** Another evidence of submission to God is remorse over sin (cf. Ps. 51).

5. (10a) **Swallow Your Pride:** Another evidence of submission to God is humility.

C. (10b) The *result* of humility before God is being honored by Him.

II. (11-12) Another result of submission to God is not judging other believers by slandering them.

A. (11a) Another way to submit to God is given in the command to avoid slandering other believers.

B. (11b-12) The cause of slandering others is placing one’s own opinion over God’s right to judge.

**Homiletical Exposition** (cyclical inductive form)

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